

Virginia Department of Emergency Management Virginia Homeland Security Grant Fact Sheet
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What is the Homeland Security Grant Program?

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has several grant programs that provide funds to states and local governments. Two of the main programs are the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) and the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program (LETPP). Additional funding streams within the Homeland Security Grant Program include the Citizen Corps Program (CCP) and Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS). The amount of funds Virginia received for these programs was drastically reduced in 2006 from the previous year by 49 percent.

When the SHSP and LETPP funding streams began, DHS allowed the states to determine the best course of distribution of the funds among the localities. For the previous grant cycles, Virginia chose to distribute a base amount with an adjustment for population to the localities because it offered the best options for our localities. However, in 2006, DHS mandated changes to the process.

DHS Changed The Grant Process

DHS no longer allows grants to localities using a base amount with an adjustment for population. Instead, grants must now be based on state- or region-wide projects that are submitted to DHS for approval. These changes were in place for 2006 and continue to be refined by DHS.

Communicating The Change

DHS informed states in 2005 that the grant process for 2006 was going to change dramatically. The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) and the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness (OCP) attempted to communicate the change as broadly as possible to local first responder stakeholder groups through stakeholders' meetings, regional coordinators briefings, Emergency Management Update, industry conferences, and direct conversations that started in January 2006.

The Funding Decision Process

For the 2006 grant, more than 250 local and state representatives attended a stakeholders' meeting in January 2006 to develop initiatives that were submitted to DHS for approval. The attendees were nominated by associations that represent local emergency medical services, fire, law enforcement, and city and county administrators. Staff from various state agencies attended as well.

The group developed a list of initiatives that amounted to \$43 million. Those initiatives were submitted to DHS in April 2006. In July 2006, Virginia was awarded only \$15 million in SHSP and LETPP funds. The limited funds drastically reduced the number of initiatives that could be funded.

In anticipation that the funds would be less than needed for fully funding each initiative, each project had developed a statement regarding the impact on the Commonwealth if the project scope was reduced or eliminated. As part of the prioritization of initiatives the 80% local share DHS guidance requirement was a criterion in determining which projects would be funded. Initiatives that had a local share emphasis and would allow appropriate distribution of the 80% local share were funded over initiatives that solely focused on state agency needs. Using this information OCP and VDEM prioritized the projects in order to implement as many of these initiatives as possible with the funds available. This process established what was funded with the 2006 grant.

Similar stakeholder's meetings were held in January for the 2007 grant. The group developed a list of initiatives that amounted to \$46 million. These initiatives were submitted to DHS in April. We are currently waiting for the results of these submissions from DHS.

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How Much Did Virginia Receive In 2006 And How Is It Being Allocated?

For 2006, Virginia received \$8,720,000 through the State Homeland Security Grant (SHSP) and \$6,340,000 through the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program (LETPP), \$434,038 through Citizen Corps, and \$1,393,980 through Metropolitan Medical Response System for a total of \$16,888,018. Based on the DHS guidance states are required to allocate 80% of the funding to localities.

INVESTMENT	FUNDING SOURCE	INVESTMENT AMOUNT
Tidewater Resiliency Program – A regional project to improve critical infrastructure protection	SHSP Local share	\$1,700,000
Citizen Preparedness (Citizen Corps, CERT, Ready Virginia)	SHSP Local share	\$1,006,000
	State share	\$128,038
Interoperability (competitive awards to local jurisdictions for regional radio caches)	SHSP/LETPP Local share	\$5,000,000
Law Enforcement Operations (Competitive awards to 12 local jurisdictions)	LETPP Local share	\$1,091,000
	State share	\$669,325
Statewide Training Program (NIMS/Terrorism/Law Enforcement)*	SHSP/LETPP	\$864,500
	State share	\$566,014
Statewide Comprehensive Exercise Program (Provides regional exercises as required by DHS)*	SHSP/LETPP	\$1,550,000
	State share	\$199,599
Mass Care Enhancements-Shelter Hardening Program (Will improve statewide sheltering capability, a lesson learned from Katrina)*	SHSP	\$1,142,500
	State share	\$169,094
Local, Regional, and State Planning	State share	\$520,225
Medical Enhancements (MMRS)	Local share	\$1,393,980
Project Management and future Initiatives	State share	\$887,743
TOTAL - ALL Investments	SHSP/LETPP	\$16,888,018

***Bold text** indicates funds covered by the MOU.

Why Isn't The 80% Local Share Just Distributed Directly To Localities Based On A Base Or Population Formula?

DHS no longer allows this to happen. Funds are going to localities through regional projects such as the Tidewater Resiliency Program or the purchase of regional radio caches.

The Need For Memorandums Of Understanding

Local governments are being asked to sign the MOU to allow the state to spend \$3.5 million of the 2006 SHSP and LETPP local share funds on behalf of the localities for training, regional exercises, and shelter hardening. The MOUs are needed because Virginia did not receive enough 2006 homeland security grant funds to continue the DHS mandated training and exercise programs which are provided to Virginia

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localities. In the past, this program was funded by the state share alone, but those funds no longer are sufficient to sustain the program.

In addition, as part of a lesson learned from Katrina, Virginia is undergoing a major project to improve its all-hazards statewide emergency shelter capability. This project will provide more robust sheltering capabilities throughout the Commonwealth.

None of these funds will be used for salaries or administrative purposes. The rest of the local share (\$8.5 million) is going directly to localities to fund radio caches, citizen preparedness, infrastructure protection programs, and law enforcement operations.

The State Share

As with previous years, we are continuing to use the state share to fund training and exercises, as well as grant management and operational personnel. However, the decrease in the homeland security funds threatens to shut down the DHS mandated training and exercise programs. Localities use these programs to comply with National Incident Management System, educate staff, and test their operational plans. Using the DHS grant guidance and examples of MOU templates, OCP and VDEM implemented DHS' MOU approach as a way of continuing these valuable programs as well as addressing the need for shelter hardening.

2006 Fund Status

Funds for citizen preparedness, and communications interoperability, and the Tidewater Resiliency Program were released by DHS in October 2006. Those projects are underway. The state only recently received approval from DHS to move forward with the training, exercises, and shelter hardening initiatives.

The 2007 Grant Process

2007 funds will go through a similar process. A stakeholders' meeting was held in January 2007 to identify initiatives. The proposed initiatives included training and exercise programs; citizen outreach; Metropolitan Medical Response Systems improvements; enhanced chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive capabilities; interoperable communications; critical infrastructure; intelligence sharing; shelter improvements; and multi-state evacuation planning. The identified initiatives amounted to \$43 million. They were sent to DHS for approval in April 2007. DHS will announce how much each state will receive in mid-July.

Future Grant Cycles

We expect that DHS will continue to refine their grant allocation approach while requiring regional or statewide initiatives to represent a larger portion of future funding provided. OCP has set up regional preparedness advisory councils to develop future grant initiatives and is building a Stakeholder Steering Committee with representation from local emergency response personnel.